

REMARKS

This paper is responsive to the Office Action mailed September 7, 2006. Claims 1-20 are currently pending in the above-identified application. Claims 1, 2, 9, 11 and 15 have been amended. Support for all amended claims can be found in the specification, and no new matter has been added by these amendments. Reconsideration of the claims in view of the amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. 112

Claims 16-19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Claims 16-19 recite the limitation "said connected state value". The Office Action states that there is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claims.

Applicants have amended independent claims 1, 2, 9 and 11 to include the limitation "a connected state value". Claims 16-19 are dependent on amended independent claims 1, 2, 9 and 11, respectively. Thus, the limitation "said connected state value" in claims 16-19 has antecedent basis in the corresponding independent claim.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. 102

Claims 1-4, 6, 9-11 and 15-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,343,324 issued to *Hubis*. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Claim 1, as amended, recites in part "said connection information definition block includes a logical volume connection information specification division in which a connected state value concerning the connection of said computer is specified in relation to each logical volume included in said disk device or each logical area in each logical volume included in said disk device, said connected state value being a numerical value ranging between a minimum

value and a maximum value, said maximum value signifying that said computer is fully connected, said minimum value signifying that said computer is fully disconnected, an intermediate value between said maximum value and said minimum value signifying a conditionally connected state for said computer."

Hubis discloses controlling access to a hardware device in a computer system having a plurality of computers and at least one hardware device connected to the plurality of computers. A locally unique identifier is associated with each of the plurality of computers. A data structure is defined in a memory. Based on the locally unique identifier, the data structure identifies which computers may be granted access to the device. The data structure is queried to determine if a requesting computer should be granted access to the hardware device.

Hubis does not disclose the elements of claim 1. Specifically, none of the cited references disclose, "said connected state value being a numerical value ranging between a minimum value and a maximum value." Thus, claim 1 is allowable.

Independent claims 2, 9, 11 and 15 have been amended to include "said connected state value being a numerical value ranging between a minimum value and a maximum value." Thus, claims 2, 9, 11 and 15 are allowable. Claims 3, 4, 6, 10, 16-20 depend from one of the independent claims discussed above and are allowable at least for the same reasons.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. 103

Claims 5, 7 and 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Hubis* in view of "Operating System Support for Virtual Machines" by *King*. Claim 13 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Hubis* in view of "Load Distribution via Static Scheduling and Client Redirection for Replicated Web Servers" by *Tang*. Claim 8 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Hubis* and *King* in view of *Tang*. Claim 14 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Hubis* in view of "The Design and Implementation of an Intrusion Tolerant System" by *Reynolds*.

Even assuming that *King*, *Hubis*, *Tang*, and *Reynolds* disclose the additional features recited in dependent claims 5, 7, 8 and 12-14, those claims are still patentable at least due to their dependency from allowable claims 1, 9, and 11 since *King*, *Hubis*, *Tang*, and *Reynolds* do not cure the deficiencies of *Hubis*. Neither *King*, *Hubis*, *Tang*, *Reynolds* nor any combination thereof teach or suggest "said connected state value being a numerical value ranging between a minimum value and a maximum value."

For at least the foregoing reasons, claims 5, 7, 8 and 12-14 are patentable over the cited art.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 206-467-9600.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date


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